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APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE BACKS INCREASED INVESTMENT IN ENERGY R&D TO HELP ADDRESS SKYROCKETING ENERGY COSTS, OBEY SAYS

WASHINGTON, D.C. - To help address skyrocketing energy costs and break the nation's dependence on foreign oil, the House Appropriations Committee, Chaired by Seventh District Congressman Dave Obey (D-WI), today voted to increase federal investments into cutting edge alternative energy and energy conservation.

"As we proved when Neil Armstrong landed on the Moon, Americans can do anything when we put our minds to it. We need to harness that same American spirit to overcome the energy crunch," said Obey. "That's why we've made investing in energy solutions a top priority, and this bill shows that focus. We've got a long way to go with the legislative process, but this bill provides \$800 million more than last year for energy efficiency and renewable energy programs, establishes new facilities for energy research, and provides for a billion dollars in loans to help American auto makers and their suppliers retool so they can build more energy efficient vehicles and compete with foreign manufacturers."

Obey noted that the Committee's bill includes:

- \$500 million for new initiatives established by the 110th Congress in the Energy Independence and Security Act to promote energy independence, including:
 - \$295 million to help states and local communities use renewable energy and be more energy efficient.
 - \$25 million to make it easier for Americans to access renewable fuels.
 - \$1 billion in loans, and \$30 million in grants to automakers and parts suppliers to upgrade factories in order to produce fuel efficient vehicles.

- \$305 million for the government to work with industry on developing technologies for improved fuel efficiency such as improved batteries or engines that burn clean fuel.

- \$250 million for grants to improve production of alternative fuels such as cellulosic ethanol and biodiesel.

- \$250 million for the weatherization program, which helps families reduce their energy costs; rejecting the President's proposal to eliminate it.

- \$862 million for advanced energy research to address scientific barriers to advancing technologies for energy generation and storage such as fusion energy and advanced batteries, including:
 - \$100 million for approximately two dozen Energy Frontier Research Centers aimed at addressing a broad array of breakthrough energy research avenues.
 - \$15 million to establish an Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy (ARPA-E) to spearhead advanced energy research.

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